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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 21 December 1995, by its resolution 50/158, the General Assembly, inter alia, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (A/50/575 and Add.1) and noted with appreciation the continued and increasing participation of OAU in the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies; called upon the United Nations organs, in particular the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, to continue to involve OAU closely in all their activities concerning Africa and to cooperate with OAU in the context of the pacific settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa, as provided for under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations; endorsed the convening of a meeting of the secretariats of the two organizations in 1996, at Addis Ababa, to review and evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations agreed at the November 1995 meeting and to adopt new and effective joint action; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the resolution and on the development of cooperation between OAU and the organizations of the United Nations system.

II. CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

2. In a message to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session delivered on his behalf by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia on 27 September 1995, Mr. Meles Zenawi, President of Ethiopia and the then Chairman of OAU, stressed the need for the international community to lend its support to African initiatives in the areas of prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and economic growth and development. The Secretary-General of the United Nations continued to consult with the Secretary-General of OAU on all African issues of common concern to the two organizations during meetings held between them in New York and during the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, held at Yaoundé from 8 to 10 July 1996.

III. COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations Secretariat

3. The Centre for Human Rights has maintained and strengthened its contacts and cooperation in various areas with the OAU secretariat and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

4. The human rights technical cooperation project established in 1993 for Burundi is being implemented by the Centre for Human Rights in close collaboration with the OAU Observer Mission in Burundi. In cooperation with OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Centre organized, from 14 to 17 May 1996 in Addis Ababa, a regional seminar on universal accession to the principal international human rights instruments. Seventeen (17) African countries took part in the seminar.

5. Cooperation between the Centre for Human Rights and OAU includes an element relating to the training of members of the armed forces in human rights. This cooperation began in 1994 and the Centre intends to strengthen it at the subregional level through seminars and training courses. In this connection, senior officers and officials at the OAU secretariat have been invited on a regular basis to take part as experts or participants in the seminars organized by the Centre for officers from Africa and Eastern Europe. Further, the same officers were invited to participate in the consultative meeting organized by the Centre at Geneva from 10 to 12 October 1994 on the introduction of human rights education in military academies.

6. As part of its training programme for the armed forces, the Centre organized, from 6 to 10 May 1996 at Turin, a seminar on human rights, democracy and the rule of law for 30 senior officers from the armed forces of the Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa. On that occasion a senior officer in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General submitted, at the Centre's request, a communication on the question of security and the development of peacekeeping machinery in Africa. Lastly, the Centre intends to organize for September 1996 in Addis Ababa, in cooperation with OAU, a human rights training seminar for directors of military academies.

7. In 1995-1996, the Centre provided a grant to the African Commission on Human and People's Rights to enable it to strengthen its information and documentation centre and make it operational, to organize seminars and training courses and to hire the staff and acquire the facilities required for the discharge of its mandate. The Centre allocated financial resources to the Commission for the organization of a seminar on women's rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, held at Lomé on 8 and 9 March 1995. The seminar was attended by 54 participants from 27 African countries.

B. Economic Commission for Africa

8. Early in June 1996, the Joint Secretariat (Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and OAU) met at Addis Ababa with representatives of the regional economic communities. The meeting was followed by the seventh consultative meeting of the heads of the Joint Secretariat and the regional economic communities, which was held on 10 June 1996, also at Addis Ababa.

9. At both meetings, the three institutions reiterated the importance of economic cooperation and integration in their activities. They agreed that the members of the Joint Secretariat should complement each other in their activities geared towards the implementation of the Abuja Treaty and that the Joint Secretariat should work closely with the regional economic communities. The African Development Bank indicated that it would continue its efforts to finance multinational projects or studies related to the harmonization of the activities of those communities.

10. ECA is committed to the establishment of the African Economic Community and the restructuring of ECA envisages the establishment of an Economic Cooperation and Integration Division responsible, inter alia, for community affairs. It was also agreed that the Joint Secretariat should undertake a coordinated action

with regard to the World Food Summit, the African Energy Commission, the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, sustainable development and environment, commodity diversification fund, the Fourth World Conference on Women and Africa's external debt.

11. The Joint Secretariat will also play a key role in the implementation of a programme on the promotion of Africa's economic cooperation and integration through the establishment of the African Economic Community, which is funded by the United Nations Development Programme. The role of the Joint Secretariat will include the rationalization of the regional economic communities and other intergovernmental organizations, as well as the establishment of a Resources Mobilization Committee to assist the regional economic communities and the African Economic Community in their efforts to secure funds.

C. United Nations Children's Fund

12. A major preoccupation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is to give meaning and practical effect to the decision taken by its Executive Board in 1990, which was reaffirmed in 1995, to accord priority attention during the current decade to the Africa region in terms of financial, material and human resource allocation. To this end, during the year, the UNICEF representative in Ethiopia was formally accredited to OAU and ECA, and UNICEF appointed a Senior Adviser on Africa to interact directly with senior staff of those organizations.

13. One of the important components of UNICEF advocacy is devoted to supporting Africa and its leaders in maintaining their concern for children. Activities included visits by the Executive Director to several African countries and attendance at the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, at Yaoundé in July 1996, at which a UNICEF-sponsored resolution on the plight of African children in situations of armed conflict was adopted. A high point of the Summit was the presentation by children from war-affected countries of a declaration against war, an Anti-War Agenda, to the Heads of State and Government. UNICEF and OAU plan to mount a joint follow-up effort to the Agenda.

14. UNICEF continued to collaborate with OAU in devising a strategy to combat iodine deficiency disorders on a continental scale. At a meeting jointly sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and other partners and hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe at Harare in April 1996, representatives of almost all States members of OAU agreed, in principle, to eliminate such disorders from the continent by the year 2000.

15. As at 30 June 1996, only one OAU member State had not yet ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. At the same time, 29 States members of OAU were reported to have finalized their National Programmes of Action. Implementation of the programmes is carried out through a working relationship between OAU, the African Development Bank, ECA and UNICEF.

16. In 1995 and 1996, African heads of State, First Ladies, Ministers of Youth and Sports and other high-ranking officials participated in educational,

cultural and sporting events commemorating the Day of the African Child on 16 June. The Day was also commemorated in New York in 1996 in the context of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF, in a ceremony involving OAU and African Permanent Missions to the United Nations. Appropriately, Ethiopian children, sitting in a parliamentary session on 17 June at OAU headquarters at Addis Ababa, issued a Children's Declaration for the Day of the African Child.

D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

17. During the period under review, consultations took place between the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and OAU regarding the participation of UNCTAD in the work of the preparatory committee for the Second Afro-Arab Trade Fair that was held at Johannesburg in October 1995. The preparatory committee meeting, also held at Johannesburg, was organized by OAU, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the South African authorities.

18. UNCTAD also participated in the OAU/LAS Economic Cooperation Forum which was held during the Second Afro-Arab Trade Fair. An UNCTAD stand was set up at the Fair, at which information on UNCTAD activities, including its technical cooperation programmes related to the expansion of the African trade sector, was provided. UNCTAD documentation was also distributed to participants in the Fair. OAU has invited the UNCTAD secretariat to be associated with the preparations for and organization of the seventh All-Africa Trade Fair, to be held at Lagos in November 1996, as well as the Third Afro-Arab Trade Fair, which will be organized in cooperation with LAS in the United Arab Emirates in 1997.

19. Meetings have been held during 1996 between the UNCTAD and OAU secretariats during which several areas of actual and potential cooperation have been identified. These include UNCTAD technical advice on the trade-related protocols (rules of origin and customs cooperation) of the African Economic Community and work on ensuring a link between the Global Trade Point Network (GTPNet) and the Pan African Trade Information System (PANAFIST). OAU has requested the assistance of UNCTAD in the organization of an investment forum to be held at the same time as the All-Africa Trade Fair. OAU has also offered to encourage countries which have not yet adopted the UNCTAD Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) to consider favourably measures to strengthen customs automation on the basis of technical cooperation from UNCTAD.

E. United Nations Development Programme

20. The cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and OAU has concentrated on strengthening the managerial and administrative capacities of OAU and providing support for the African Economic Community. Individual and group training has been carried out in areas such as management skills for secretaries, records management, project preparation and management, programme budgeting, procurement and stock control management, technical report writing and others. Also, in an effort to modernize OAU operations, new equipment, spare parts, computer hardware and software were purchased and the Printing Unit was re-equipped. In addition, the project has served to

strengthen management systems through the publication of a number of manuals on accounting, budget and financial rules and regulations.

21. UNDP has also assisted in bringing women's issues into the mainstream of African development through the establishment of a Women's Unit in OAU. Two gender-awareness workshops were held for African ambassadors and senior OAU management officers and follow-up activities that included the development of strategies for coordination of the OAU Women's Unit were conducted. In addition, UNDP has committed US$ 1.9 million to support the establishment of the African Economic Community, the strengthening of relations with the regional economic communities and the reinforcement and reorganization of the administrative, management and resource mobilization capacities of OAU.

22. UNDP has committed itself to the strengthening of the OAU capacity for handling activities envisaged under the mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Thus far, a framework for programme support to the conflict management division has been issued and discussions between OAU and UNDP are under way for the setting up of modalities for utilizing the sum of $3 million for the programme. The OAU Peace Fund will also benefit from support to be provided under the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa which was launched in March 1996. Under the Initiative, governance will be one of the key priorities of assistance that will be coordinated by UNDP.

F. United Nations Environment Programme

23. As a follow-up to the decisions of the fifth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), ECA and OAU organized the sixth session of the Conference in December 1995. One of the major decisions taken at the session was support and promotion of the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

24. UNEP has provided financial and technical support for the organization of an African expert group meeting to prepare an African consensus and common perspective and position on the Convention. The common perspective and position is intended to guide African countries in the follow-up and implementation of the provisions of the Convention. UNEP has continued to provide support to the Conference secretariat in coordinating the implementation of the Conference programme and to participate in the major meetings of OAU.

G. United Nations Population Fund

25. In June 1996, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) concluded a four-year project with OAU. The project sought to strengthen the technical capacity of OAU in areas relating to population and development, with a view to assisting member States in adopting and implementing population policies.

26. The main lesson learned from the project was that OAU, as a political body, was uniquely placed to play a leadership role in creating awareness and

promoting population policies and programmes. In view of this, UNFPA is considering a new four-year project which was submitted by OAU in June 1996, under which support would be provided for technical assistance, training and advocacy activities. Project objectives include the further strengthening and consolidation of the OAU population and development unit by the year 2000 as a functioning and effective technical resource and the further strengthening of the African Population Commission by the year 2000 as an effective structure for maintaining a high political profile for population issues and for sustained advocacy.

27. While the previous project focused mainly on creating awareness of Africa's population growth rates and their consequences, the proposed project examines key issues for Africa's development, taking into account the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and OAU resolutions and declarations on population matters. The proposed project is also concerned with achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable social and human development; reproductive health including family planning and sexual health; and gender sensitivity and women's empowerment.

H. United Nations International Drug Control Programme

28. At Yaoundé in July 1996 the OAU adopted a report on the drug control and abuse situation in Africa and a Plan of Action for Drug Control in Africa, which was prepared for OAU by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. The Council of Ministers, before which a representative of the Programme made a presentation, also adopted a resolution in which, inter alia, it commended the efforts made by the OAU secretariat and the Programme in drawing up the Plan of Action and called on the Programme to further strengthen and intensify its cooperation with OAU.

I. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

29. During the period under review, cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and OAU was pursued and intensified through regular contacts between the staff and leadership of the two organizations. The relationship between OAU and UNHCR was further strengthened by joint efforts aimed at addressing the consequences of forced population displacement in the Great Lakes region within the framework of the Plan of Action adopted at Bujumbura in February 1995 by UNHCR and the OAU-sponsored Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region.

30. A follow-up meeting on the Bujumbura Plan of Action was organized by UNHCR and OAU at Addis Ababa in February 1996. In order to improve the follow-up mechanisms, the meeting decided to establish a 10-member steering committee, alternatively chaired by the heads of OAU and UNHCR. Subcommittees at national level as well as focal points at both Addis Ababa and Geneva might be set up to ensure closer interaction and better coordination. The first Steering Committee meeting was held at Geneva in May 1996.

31. Besides regular contacts with the OAU Refugee Bureau and the Commission of Twenty on Refugees, areas of cooperation included the implementation of the recommendation of the OAU/UNHCR symposium on refugees held in 1994 and the development of a new bilateral agreement updating the one signed in 1969.

32. The Secretary-General of OAU attended, as a guest of honour, the forty-sixth session of the Executive Committee of UNHCR in October 1995 and welcomed the cooperation taking place between the two organizations at the field level. In support of the OAU efforts to set up an early warning mechanism, UNHCR will continue to make available to the OAU secretariat all required data, including the recently issued refugee database REFWORLD.

33. A UNHCR delegation attended the meetings of the OAU Council of Ministers and Heads of State and Government at Yaoundé in July 1996. The Council of Ministers adopted a resolution in which it noted with appreciation the activities of UNHCR, and requested the OAU Secretary-General, as well as the Commission of Twenty on Refugees, to continue their search for lasting solutions to the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa, in close cooperation with UNHCR.

J. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

34. A significant new development in cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and OAU was the accreditation in 1995 of the FAO representative in Ethiopia as, concurrently, FAO representative to OAU, and the assignment of a Senior Liaison Officer to assist in managing the liaison between FAO and OAU.

35. At the programme level, FAO continued to collaborate with OAU on the development of the Common African Agricultural Programme, working with OAU on the preparation of a nineteenth FAO Regional Conference information document on the Programme. In support of the fourth session of the OAU Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC) Inter-African Committee on Oceanography, Sea and Inland Fisheries, which was held at Pointe Noire, Congo, in April 1996, FAO prepared a paper on the status of aquaculture in Africa: its contribution to fish production, development and growth. On rural youth, FAO contributed $10,000 to support the OAU Pan-African Conference on Youth and Development held at Addis Ababa in March 1996. It also provided technical assistance.

36. FAO has continued to cooperate with OAU in the control of animal pests and diseases. The Pan-African Rinderpest Campaign, executed by the OAU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR), is a most important element of the Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme which FAO, through the Emergency Prevention System, has been mandated to coordinate. The Pan-African Vaccine Centre was supported by a project under the FAO technical cooperation programme, while a longer-term project funded by the European Community was being finalized. Two additional European Community-funded trust fund projects in support of the Rinderpest Campaign are being implemented; they are designed to strengthen the epidemiological and communications components of the Campaign.

37. The resurgence and spread of contagious bovine pleuropneumonia in Africa is the focus of coordinated attention on the part of OAU/IBAR and the Emergency Prevention System. Missions were sent to several countries and these have been followed by projects for emergency preparedness, disease recognition and control in five countries. A long-term regional strategy is under development. The problem of food-and-mouth disease in East Africa is currently the focus of joint action by the Emergency Prevention System and OAU/IBAR.

38. The endeavour of the Pan-African Rinderpest Campaign to strengthen the functioning of veterinary services to cope with transboundary epidemic diseases has been aided by two workshops in emergency preparedness and contingency planning, organized jointly by the Emergency Prevention System and OAU/IBAR. Further workshops are planned. FAO is working with countries of the Southern African Development Community, OAU/IBAR, the European Community and the International Fund for Agricultural Development to develop a subregional disease information and control network.

39. FAO is a serving member of the Executive Committee of the International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control which is the OAU/IBAR body with responsibility for convening the biennial international meeting and for addressing technical aspects of control. The twenty-third meeting of the Council was held at Banjul from 11 to 15 September 1995, with the active support of FAO. Initiatives towards international coordination of tsetse and trypanosomiasis research and control have resulted in the formation of new programme structures whereby OAU/IBAR, FAO, the International Atomic Energy Agency and WHO have agreed to combine resources within a joint secretariat for the programme.

40. FAO cooperation with OAU is also reflected in the Coordinated Multi-Donor Programme for Tick and Tick-borne Disease Control in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa. This FAO programme, currently in its third phase, is supported by OAU, which has participated in the programme's annual meetings where progress is discussed and has actively collaborated in the setting up of quality-control standards for tick-borne disease vaccines in Africa.

K. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

41. The fourth joint consultation meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and OAU was held at UNESCO headquarters on 17 November 1995. In the framework of institutional capacity-building in Africa, UNESCO has offered to contribute to strengthening the OAU secretariat by sending on detachment (to the UNESCO office at Addis Ababa or to the OAU secretariat) specialists in education, science and technology as well as the culture of peace.

42. In December 1995, the Secretary-General of OAU and the Director-General of UNESCO held discussions in Paris concerning cooperation between UNESCO and OAU and the manner in which the two organizations, by working together, could be of better service to Africa. An aide-mémoire which reflected the various issues reviewed at that meeting was signed on 23 March 1996.

43. Pursuant to the recommendations of the joint consultation meeting and as part of the strengthening of its partnership with African regional organizations, UNESCO was represented at the seminar on the establishment within OAU of an early warning system for conflict prevention and settlement in Africa, which was held at Addis Ababa in January 1996. A series of consultations between the two organizations in the field of conflict prevention and peacekeeping were held to strengthen the UNESCO contribution to initiatives taken by OAU through its Culture of Peace Programme.

44. UNESCO is also reinforcing its cooperation with OAU in the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. On 18 March 1996, a distinct department, Priority Africa, was established in UNESCO with specific responsibility for the liaison, coordination and mobilization needed to ensure within the secretariat that the priority assigned to the Africa region will be reflected in all programmes. The Department will also ensure follow-up to "Audience Africa" and contribute to the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

45. Furthermore, a team of specialists headed by the Deputy Director-General for Africa attended the OAU Assembly and discussed questions pertaining to cooperation between UNESCO and OAU. While awaiting other measures and actions, the Director-General has approved the appointment of a senior consultant to the OAU secretariat for the follow-up of activities carried out jointly by OAU and UNESCO.

L. World Health Organization

46. During the period under review, the World Health Organization collaborated with OAU in the preparation of a theme paper on the situation of women in Africa in the context of family health for the Fifth Conference of African Ministers of Health, which was held at Cairo in April 1995. On the basis of the recommendations of the Conference, OAU and WHO have continued their activities to ensure the promotion of the draft Health Protocol and are prepared to set up a joint team to review and evaluate in member States the progress of implementation of the relevant resolutions and declarations.

47. WHO has pledged to provide the necessary support to States members of OAU in achieving the goal of polio eradication in Africa by the year 2000. In collaboration with OAU, WHO is striving to mobilize resources for the accelerated implementation of water supply and sanitation programmes in Africa with a view to the implementation of the Africa 2000 Initiative for Water Supply and Sanitation; a consultative meeting was held at Brazzaville in June 1996 with the participation of all OAU member States. WHO has sponsored the participation of a senior OAU staff member in the international diploma course in emergency preparedness and crisis management, organized jointly by WHO and the University of Geneva for the 1996 session. Moreover, it has sponsored the participation of a senior OAU staff member in the Conference on the Elimination of Micronutrient Deficiencies by the year 2000 (April 1996) at Harare, and that of another staff member in the seminar held in Zaire on the control of the Ebola virus.

48. In the context of the African Regional Nutrition Strategy (1993-2003), OAU and WHO collaborated in the elaboration of the document containing the African Common Position to be submitted to the World Food Summit scheduled for Rome in November 1996.

49. WHO provided technical assistance in the formulation of the terms of reference of the post of head of the OAU Division for Environment, Human Settlements and Natural Disaster Reduction. It also provided technical assistance to the office of the OAU Secretary-General for the establishment of the new Division for Conflict Resolution, with special focus on the technical requirements for early warning systems. WHO participated in the seminar on the establishment within OAU of an early warning system on conflict situations in Africa. WHO delegations headed by the Director-General attended the meetings of the Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held during the period under review.

50. In the context of the implementation of the first phase of the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (strengthening the existing regional communities), WHO is a member of the United Nations Steering Committee that supports the revitalization of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. It participates in the working groups on humanitarian assistance, conflict resolution, food security and environmental protection. WHO is also working on a project proposal for disease control in the Horn of Africa and is collaborating with OAU in efforts to build the capacity of African non-governmental organizations.

M. International Monetary Fund

51. The International Monetary Fund continued to cooperate with OAU through its member States that are also Fund members and with the United Nations through contacts between the Director of the Fund's Office at the United Nations and the OAU Steering Committee in relation to the priority programme for Africa. The main vehicles for cooperation included financial assistance, external debt and aid coordination, policy advice, surveillance, and technical assistance.

52. The Fund continued to provide its own financial resources under its different facilities, especially under the Structural Adjustment Facility and the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility to African countries in support of their structural adjustment programmes. The Fund also continued to mobilize additional resources for the African countries, in the context of multilateral conferences on aid coordination (e.g., consultative group meetings and UNDP-sponsored round table discussions) as well as debt rescheduling by the Paris Club.

53. The Fund exercised its policy advice and surveillance functions through its regular consultations with OAU member States and by helping them design adjustment programmes that could be supported by the Fund; it also continued to collaborate actively with regional organizations in Africa. The Fund continued to provide extensive technical assistance for the effective management of policy reforms in many areas, including public finance, monetary policy, debt management and exchange rate management, as well as in the design of social

policies. It also offered training, both at headquarters and in the field, in financial analysis, public finance and balance of payments.

54. More recently, the Fund has undertaken to support, together with the other United Nations agencies, the Secretary-General's Special Initiative on Africa, designed to speed up economic recovery. The Initiative is based on the priorities set out by the OAU Council of Ministers at its seventeenth extraordinary session, held at Cairo in March 1995.

N. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

55. As a joint sponsor of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in cooperation with OAU and ECA, reviewed critical issues for the effective implementation of the programme for the Decade and monitored the activities being implemented as well as the guidelines and framework for cooperation.

56. In cooperation with OAU and ECA, UNIDO organized the twelfth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry at Gaborone in June 1995. The Conference focused its deliberations on global issues affecting the industrialization of Africa, such as the Uruguay Round agreements and their implications for African industry. A private sector forum was held concurrently with the Conference, at which high-level experts and private sector executives discussed the issues and defined guidelines for a support strategy for private sector development.

57. UNIDO participated in the Second Afro-Arab Trade Fair which was organized by OAU at Johannesburg in October 1995, as well as in the Economic Cooperation Forum which deliberated, inter alia, on cooperation in the field of economic production and exchange; prospects and challenges in the promotion of Afro-Arab cooperation; transfer of technologies in the Afro-Arab region; joint ventures in the Afro-Arab region; and the implications of the World Trade Organization for the African and Arab countries.

58. UNIDO approved a project concerning cooperation with OAU within the framework of the establishment of an African Economic Community and in the implementation of the Cairo Agenda for Action. The project will assist OAU in elaborating the protocol for an appropriate strategy to promote regional cooperation and integration, with particular emphasis on private sector development, and in the preparation of a selected number of high impact regional programmes.

IV. COOPERATION IN OTHER AREAS

A. International Civil Aviation Organization

59. The Organization of African Unity continued to be invited to the meetings of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), including sessions of its Assembly. ICAO has provided information, particularly on the implementation of its regional air navigation plans by African countries, for the study of air

transport in Africa undertaken by Egypt in accordance with the decision taken in 1993 by the OAU Council of Ministers.

60. ICAO continued to support United Nations programmes for Africa's economic recovery and development and provided information to ECA following the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. It also continued to play an active role in the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, contributing to the work of the Resources Mobilization Committee which prepared the list of projects for the Decade.

61. ICAO maintained a close and continuous working relationship with the African Civil Aviation Commission and provided the Commission with expert advice and secretariat assistance upon request. Documents and studies of interest to the African region were provided regularly to OAU to allow it to maintain basic documentation on civil aviation matters. ICAO also worked in close cooperation with subregional organizations in Africa on the development of international civil aviation, notably the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States.

B. International Maritime Organization

62. In sub-Saharan Africa, the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was aimed at supporting the maritime transport goals agreed by the African Ministers of Transport and at reversing the declining trend of maritime transport in the region as a whole in the fields of safety, training and the protection of the marine environment. With regard to the Arab States members of OAU, the IMO Programme emphasized the need to strengthen their maritime administration.

63. Wider ratification of IMO conventions relating to the protection of the marine environment was encouraged, with particular emphasis on the provision of port reception facilities and marine emergency response. The programme of assistance in the field of maritime training concentrated on training of seafarers and shore-based personnel and upgrading of existing maritime training centres in line with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, including the upgrading of facilities, curricula and certification systems.

C. World Intellectual Property Organization

64. At the opening of the thirty-first session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at Addis Ababa, in June 1995, the incoming Chairman of OAU, together with a high-ranking official of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), officiated at a medal award ceremony during which the 1995 WIPO gold medal was awarded for the best African invention. The award has aimed at fostering the spirit of innovation in Africa, particularly in those fields deemed most relevant to its development.

65. In February 1996, a high-ranking WIPO official attended the sixty-third ordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers, held at Addis Ababa. In June 1996, a high-level OAU delegation led by an Assistant Secretary-General held discussions at WIPO headquarters at Geneva with the Director General and other officials of WIPO concerning future cooperation between the two organizations. WIPO was also represented at the OAU meetings at Yaoundé in July 1996.